

**Anwar says Hadi crucial to Pakatan**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
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**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 29 — Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim called today on Datuk Seri Abdul Hadi Awang to change his mind about pulling back from active politics ahead of the next general election which Pakatan Rakyat (PR) insists it can win.

The PAS president indicated his desire to back out of running in the 13th general election yesterday and said it is time for the next generation of leaders to shape the party.

“I hope Ustaz Hadi withdraws his decision as he is critical for cooperation. He is important to PAS and Pakatan Rakyat,” Opposition Leader Anwar told The Malaysian Insider in a text message forwarded through his press secretary.

The PKR de facto leader added he would meet Abdul Hadi “in the shortest time possible” to ensure the Marang MP “remains in PR’s top leadership.”

Abdul Hadi had said he wanted to step down as he has been an elected representative for over 30 years although his PR colleagues, including PAS spiritual leader Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, Anwar and the DAP’s Lim Kit Siang and Karpal Singh have served in the same capacity for a similar amount of time.

Umno has been quick to capitalise on Hadi’s announcement, calling it a sign of an internal crisis within the Islamic party.

“This situation will probably be a major blow to PAS spiritual leader, Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat, as he is the one who should be making such a decision after holding the post of Kelantan menteri besar for so long.

“This (decision) is probably the result of the conflict within PAS, including the sacking of Datuk Hasan Ali,” Bernama Online reported the Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Awang Adek Hussin as saying.

Former Selangor executive councillor Hasan was axed from the party after calling on opposition supporters not to attend a rally in support of Anwar on the day the High Court ruled on his sodomy charge.

The former Selangor PAS chief has also repeatedly accused the party of deviating from its Islamic cause.

Abdul Hadi had also said that if he does not contest any seat, he would be free to campaign across the country to strengthen the party.

Anwar also did the same during the Election 2008 campaign as he was barred from contesting due to a criminal conviction for abuse of power.

The former deputy prime minister's presence across the country was said to be a key factor in opposition parties denying Barisan Nasional (BN) its customary two-thirds hold of Parliament and five state governments in the ensuing general election.

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